

## From the Editor

THIS issue of *Soldiers* features the 101st Airborne Division in Afghanistan. Our photo editor, SSG Alberto Betancourt, provides an inside look at taking care of business in a combat zone.

Through never-before-seen photographs and compelling first-person accounts, Betancourt takes us directly to the War on Terrorism's front lines. In "Task Force Rakkasans," he chronicles the division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team, and in "MPs in Afghanistan" he shows us how the 519th MP Battalion secures the Kandahar detainee facility.

For a look at service in a warmer climate, Beth Reece takes us to Greece to showcase the soldiers assigned to NATO's Joint Sub-Regional Command, South Central, in Larissa. "Duty in Greece" provides an overview of the command's mission and our soldiers' contributions to it. "Exploring Greece's Past and Present" shows us some of the fantastic cultural and travel opportunities soldiers stationed there can take advantage of in their off-duty time.

Finally, Managing Editor Gil High brings you the hit of this year's Detroit Auto Show — the Army's newest concept vehicle, the FutureCar.

*John C. Smith*

## Retirement Facts

I READ the February issue of *Soldiers* with great interest. What especially interested me was the great pullout on retirement. It was especially meaningful to me, as I am preparing to submit for retirement.

As I looked at the formulas used to figure retirement pay, I was intrigued to find the monthly base pay for an E8 with 24 years of service to be \$3,724.80. I had to double-check to see if that was correct.

Am I that special that my LES shows my base pay as an E8 with 24 years of service as \$3,709.62, or didn't I try hard enough on my APFT?

Thanks for a great informative magazine.

MSG Timothy J. Hutchinson  
Via e-mail

WHILE we're not finance specialists (or rocket scientists, for that matter), it seems to us that maybe you're being underpaid. If we were you, we'd hotfoot it over to the local finance office and ask the pay folks to crunch the numbers again.

## Muslim and Soldier

A QUOTE you credited to CPT Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad in the February article "Muslim and Soldier" is misleading and (as written) unnecessarily controversial.

In the article CPT Muhammad is quoted and saying he was "impressed by the charisma and faith of Malcolm X." This could be misinterpreted as an endorsement of Malcolm X's life as spokesman for Nation of Islam, his militant views of societal evolution and public criticism of Martin Luther King's belief in non-violence. Those aspects of Malcolm X's legacy are not in keeping with Army

## Bad Language?

I MUST say that the March issue of *Soldiers* is very informative and has some great articles. I was impressed with the coverage of the U.S. Military Academy's 200th anniversary, and with the article on the movie "We Were Soldiers." All 48 pages are packed with information about our great Army.

However, I must take offense to a comment printed on page 33. In the article "An Author's Quest" Heike Hasenauer used a quote by journalist Joe Galloway regarding the circumstances in 1982 that led him to call LTG Hal Moore about writing the book "We Were Soldiers Once ... And Young." Galloway is quoted as referring to one of the characters in the movie "American Graffiti" as "...the goofy kid with the glasses who couldn't get laid." I was quite surprised to see this in *Soldiers* magazine.

I expect Soldiers to uphold the Army's core values. I expect the magazine to represent the Army and to be a document that family members can read. I am not comfortable with this language in print in an official Army publication. It should never have been printed. This is one instance that *Soldiers* magazine did not uphold the Army's core values or represent the Army professionally.

I initially thought the issue was a great one to show my family on the history of West Point and the Battle of the Ia Drang Valley. Now I won't be showing them one part of it.

LTC William P. Shea  
Via e-mail

values and equal-opportunity objectives.

What I am sure CPT Muhammad was referring to (but the article did not explain) was not the militant charisma and faith of Malcolm X, but his well-documented conversion to Sunni Islam and rejection of extremist beliefs.

After a pilgrimage to Mecca, Malcolm X converted to mainstream Islam and changed his name to Malik El-Shabazz. He publicly recanted his previously held convictions and embraced the concept of unity (for all mankind) as delineated in the Islamic faith.

This charisma and faith is

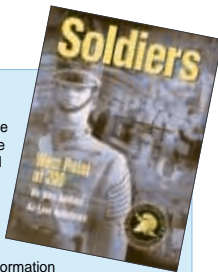
the real and rarely publicized legacy of Malik El-Shabazz. His conversion and rejection of radical ideology directly contributed to his assassination in 1965.

LTC Mark A. Farrar  
Fort Knox, Ky.

## Alive and Well

In your March interview with reporter Joe Galloway you stated that SPC 5 James Clark — a participant in the battle at Landing Zone X-ray — died as a result of his injuries. I am happy to inform you that he is alive and well and lives in Columbus, Ga.

MAJ John Calahan  
Fort Benning, Ga.



## No Berets in Reserve

IF the black beret is supposed to be symbol of unity in the entire Army, why is it that we in the reserve component haven't yet received the new beret in quantity?

In my unit, we have only gotten a handful, and those only came in two sizes — too big and too small! And no one can present a proper military bearing in berets like the few that trickled down to us.

Name withheld by request

## Official Names Only

I'VE noticed that you never run the full designations of some units, the things in parentheses like (Air Assault) or (Light). Aren't you supposed to use a unit's full, official designation?

Name withheld by request

AS a matter of fact, we are re-

quired to use only official designations — which is why we don't run things like (Air Assault) or (Light) or (Mechanized). Those are known as "parenthetical identifications," and usually indicate a unit's function. AR 220-5, "Designation, Classification and Change of Status in Units," states that when a unit designation "includes a parenthetical identification, that portion not in parentheses is the official designation."

The official designations of Army units are determined by the U.S. Army Center of Military History, not by units themselves. That's one reason why we never use such terms as "parachute infantry regiment" and "airborne infantry regiment." The Army hasn't had PIRs or AIRs in many years and, despite their widespread popularity in some airborne units, these designations are incorrect and unofficial.

## What About the 10th?

IN your coverage of Operation Enduring Freedom you've hardly mentioned the 10th Mountain Division, which has played a key role since the beginning. We're putting it on the line just as much as the folks in the 101st Airborne and special forces, yet we get no recognition. What's the deal?

Name withheld by request

Though we did mention the 10th Mountain Division several times in our Briefings department as Operation Enduring Freedom unfolded, security restrictions imposed by the division itself precluded us from doing an in-depth article on the 10th's deployment to, and early activities

*Soldiers* is for soldiers and DA civilians. We invite readers' views. Stay under 150 words — a post card will do — and include your name, rank and address. We'll withhold your name if you desire and may condense your views because of space. We can't publish or answer every one, but we'll use representative views. Write to: Feedback, *Soldiers*, 9325 Gunston Road, Ste. 5108, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5581, or e-mail: [soldiers@belvoir.army.mil](mailto:soldiers@belvoir.army.mil).

in, Central Asia. We hope to be able to focus on the division in an upcoming article.

## The Only Insignia

IN response to SSG Ryan Tozier's November 2001 letter about wearing an armband to show loyalty to the commander in chief and country, I'd just like to say one thing. You already wear the uniform of your country's armed forces. What more do you need to do to show your support?

To best serve the nation, come to work every day, practice your warrior skills and be prepared to defend your country against all enemies.

SFC James G. Thurman  
Fort Bragg, N.C.

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